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A SOURCE OF TENNYSON'S 'BUGLE SONG.'

ONE does not care especially to be classed in the category of literary hacks, as one of 'a prosaic set growing up among us, editors of booklets, bookworms, index-hunters, or men of great memories and no imagination, who *impute themselves* to the poet, and so believe that *he*, too, has no imagination, but is for ever poking his nose between the pages of some old volume in order to see what he can appropriate'—these being Tennyson's words in his memorable letter to Mr. S. E. Dawson with regard to the latter's review of *The Princess*. All this, however, must be taken generously, as poetic hyperbole, for few English poets owe more to 'old volumes' than Tennyson.

The Princess itself is a case very much in point. Tennyson's adaptations from the classics in that poem have been considerably threshed out, but no one, to my knowledge, has lighted upon so striking and beautiful an instance of poetic metamorphosis as that which resulted in the interpolary lyric, 'The splendor falls on castle walls.'

The original of this is to be found in Disraeli's grotesque novel *Vivian Grey*, in chapter 2 of Book 6.

To put oneself in the place of Tennyson, it would be necessary to start with the opening of the sixth book and follow the adventures of the picaresque hero Vivian and his servant Essper George as they journey through one of the ancient forests of South Germany; to hear the relation of the tale of Hans and the Wild Huntsman; to attend the bacchanalian orgy of the self-appointed Grand Duke of Johannisberger and his eccentric court; to escape from this elfish company, 'sooner than the sun;' to 'hark to the bugle of the hunter.' And now 'The sun is up; the generating sun! and temple, and tower, and tree, the massy wood, and the broad field, and the distant hill burst in sudden

light; quickly upcurled is the dusky mist from the shining river.' It is in this place that 'The splendor falls on castle walls and snowy summits old in story,' and that later the echoes 'die in yon rich sky, they faint on hill or field or river.' A few paragraphs further on we read in Disraeli that toward midday 'their road again entered the forest The huntsmen were abroad ; . . . the inspiriting sounds of the bugle made Vivian feel recovered from his late fatigue.' "That must be a true-hearted huntsman, Essper, by the sound of his bugle. I never heard one played with more spirit. Hark ! how fine it dies away in the wood, fainter and fainter, yet how clear !"'

This Tennyson has more than versified, when he exclaims :

O hark, O hear ! how thin and clear
 And thinner, clearer, farther going !
 O sweet and far from cliff and scar
 The horns of Elfland faintly blowing !
 Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying ;
 Blow, bugle ; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.

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